

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) An operating table comprising:  
a bearing column;  
a table top mounted on the bearing column, wherein the table top is displaceable from a middle position transversely to a longitudinal axis of the table and tiltable about a tilting axis that is substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of the table; and  
a control device that automatically activates a transverse displacement of the table top in a direction towards the middle position transversely to the longitudinal axis of the table when a predetermined critical angle is exceeded during a tilting movement.
2. Canceled
3. (Currently Amended) The operating table of claim [2] 1, wherein the critical angle is predetermined as a function of the displacement of the table top from its middle position transversely to the longitudinal axis of the table.
4. (Original) The operating table of claim 3, wherein the control device comprises an electronic control unit.
5. (Original) The operating table of claim 4, wherein the control unit comprises a comparator element for comparing an actual tilting angle with the predetermined critical angle.

6. (Original) The operating table of claim 5, wherein the control unit comprises a computing element for calculating the predetermined critical angle as a function of the displacement of the table top transversely to the longitudinal axis of the table.
7. (Original) The operating table of claim 5, wherein the control unit comprises a memory element for storing critical angle values as a function of the displacement of the table top.
8. (Currently Amended) An operating table comprising:
  - a bearing column;
  - a table top mounted on the bearing column, wherein the table top is displaceable from a middle position transversely to a longitudinal axis of the table and tiltable about a tilting axis that is substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of the table; and
  - means for automatically activating a transverse displacement of the table top in a direction towards the middle position transversely to the longitudinal axis of the table when a predetermined critical angle is exceeded during a tilting movement.
9. Canceled
10. (Currently Amended) The operating table of claim [10] 8, wherein the critical angle is predetermined as a function of the displacement of the table top from its middle position transversely to the longitudinal axis of the table.
11. (Currently Amended) A method of supporting an operating table, the method comprising:
  - supporting a table top of the operating table on a bearing column;
  - tilting the table top about a tilting axis that is substantially parallel to a longitudinal axis of the table; and
  - automatically displacing the table top towards a middle position transversely to the longitudinal axis of the table when a predetermined critical angle is exceeded during the tilting of the table top.

12. Canceled

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [12] 11, wherein the critical angle is predetermined as a function of the displacement of the table top from its middle position transversely to the longitudinal axis of the table.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, further comprising measuring a tilt angle of the table top.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising comparing the measured tilt angle with a predetermined critical angle.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising calculating the predetermined critical angle as a function of a displacement of the table top transversely to the longitudinal axis of the table.

17. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising storing values of predetermined critical angle values as a function of the displacement of the table top.